

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows.

Claims 1-12 (Cancelled)

13. (new) A process for the combustion of volatile organic compounds including the step of contacting the volatile compound with oxidation catalysts comprising mixed oxides of copper, manganese and one or more rare-earth metals, wherein the metals can assume multiple valence states, having a percentage composition by weight, of 35-40% CuO, 50-60% MnO and 10-15% La₂O₃.

14. (New) The method of claim 13 including the step of contacting the volatile organic compounds in a gaseous effluent.

15. (New) The method of claim 13 including the step of contacting the volatile organic compounds in a gaseous effluent from chemical or printing industries.

16. (new) The method of claim 13 including the step of contacting the volatile organic compounds present in gaseous effluents of reactors for the solid state polycondensation of aromatic polyester resins.

17. (new) The method of claim 16 including the step of supplying a stoichiometric amount of oxygen for the combustion of the volatile organic compounds to carbon dioxide and water.

18. (new) A process of the combustion of hydrocarbons in the burner of thermal power stations for generating electricity including the step of contacting the hydrocarbons with oxidation catalysts comprising mixed oxides of copper, manganese and one or more rare-earth metals, wherein the metals can assume multiple valence states, having a

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percentage composition by weight, expressed as CuO, MnO and rare-earth oxides (in which the metal has the lowest valence) of, respectively, 8-50%, 10-75% and 2-15%.

Respectfully submitted,

WELSH & KATZ, LTD.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerald T. Shekleton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gerald" being more prominent.

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Dated: December 8, 2003

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